

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) An exchange system comprising:
means for allowing a first user to offer a first amount of a first article of commerce in trade for a second amount of a second article of commerce, wherein the first user has the first amount of the first article of commerce in an escrow account, the first amount of the first article of commerce being placed on hold within the account of the first user for as long as the offer is active; and

means for allowing a second user to accept the offer of the first user.

26. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the allowing to offer means includes a database to store the offer of the first user.

27. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the allowing to offer means includes computer software.

28. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the allowing to accept means includes computer software.

29. (Original) The system of claim 25, further comprising means for allowing ownership of the first amount of the first article of commerce to be transferred to the second user and for ownership of the second amount of the second article of commerce to be transferred to the first user.

30. (Currently Amended) An exchange system comprising an offer-storing database, the database being configured to store offers to trade amounts of articles of commerce for amounts of other articles of commerce, the articles of commerce being held in escrow accounts and the offers being selectable by a second user, the database further storing an indication of a subscription status of second user.

31. (Original) The exchange system of claim 30, wherein offers selected by the second user can then be accepted by the second user.

32. (Original) The exchange system of claim 31, wherein the accepted offers are removed from the offer-storing database.

33. (Original) The exchange system of claim 30, wherein the offers stored in the database are created by a first user.

34. (Original) The exchange system of claim 33, wherein the first user is associated with an escrow account containing the articles that the first user is offering to trade.

35. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for exchanging articles of commerce, the method comprising the steps of:

verifying that a first client is subscribed to an exchange system;

receiving, over a communication network from [[a]] the first client, a transmission of an offer to exchange a first amount of a first article of commerce for a second amount of a second article of commerce, the first client having the first amount of the first article of commerce in a first escrow account;

storing the offer;

permitting the offer to be communicated to a second client; and

receiving, over the communication network from the second client, a transmission of an acceptance of the offer, the second client having the second amount of the second article of commerce in a second escrow account.

36. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein, upon completion of the receiving an acceptance step, the system transfers articles from the first account to the second account and from the second account to the first account.

37-72. (Cancelled)

73. (Previously Presented) An electronic exchange system comprising:
means for allowing a first user to offer a first amount of a first non-currency article of commerce in trade for a second amount of a second non-currency article of commerce;
and

means for allowing a second user to accept the offer of the first user.

74. (Original) The system of claim 73, wherein the allowing to offer means includes a database to store the offer of the first user.

75. (Original) The system of claim 73, wherein the allowing to offer means includes computer software.

76. (Original) The system of claim 74, wherein the allowing to accept means includes computer software.

77. (Original) The system of claim 74, further comprising means for allowing ownership of the first amount of the first non-currency article of commerce to be transferred to the second user and for ownership of the second non-currency amount of the second article of commerce to be transferred to the first user.

78. (Original) An exchange system comprising an offer-storing database, the database being configured to store offers to trade amounts of non-currency articles of commerce for amounts of other non-currency articles of commerce, the offers being selectable by a second user.

79. (Original) The exchange system of claim 78, wherein offers selected by the second user can then be accepted by the second user.

80. (Original) The exchange system of claim 79, wherein the accepted offers are removed from the offer-storing database.

81. (Original) The exchange system of claim 78, wherein the offers stored in the database are created by a first user.

82. (Original) The exchange system of claim 81, wherein the first user is associated with an account containing the non-currency articles that the first user is offering to trade.

83. (Original) A method in a computer system for exchanging non-currency articles of commerce, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, over a communication network from a first client, a transmission of an offer to exchange a first amount of a first non-currency article of commerce for a second amount of a second non-currency article of commerce;

storing the offer;

permitting the offer to be communicated to a second client; and

receiving, over the communication network from the second client, a transmission of an acceptance of the offer.

84. (Original) The method of claim 83, wherein the first client is associated with a first account and the second client is associated with a second account.

85. (Original) The method of claim 84, wherein, upon completion of the receiving an acceptance step, the system transfers non-currency articles from the first account to the second account and from the second account to the first account.

86. (Original) A method in a computer system for exchanging non-currency articles of commerce, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, over a communication network from a first client, a transmission of an offer to exchange a first amount of a first non-currency article of commerce for a second amount of a second non-currency article of commerce;

receiving, over a communication network from a second client, a transmission of an offer to exchange the second amount of the second non-currency article of commerce for the first amount of the first non-currency article of commerce;

matching the offer of the first client with the offer of the second client; and
providing for performance of the exchange.

87. (Original) The method of claim 86, further comprising the step of providing for notifying the first user and the second user of the exchange.

88. (Original) The method of claim 86, further comprising the step of providing for verifying that the first amount of the first non-currency article of commerce is available to be traded.

89. (Original) The method of claim 86, further comprising the step of providing for verifying that the second amount of the second non-currency article of commerce is available to be traded.

90-122. (Cancelled)

123. (New) The system of claim 1, further including means for transferring the first amount of the first article of commerce that is on hold to the second user upon acceptance of the offer by the second user.

124. (New) The system of claim 1, further including software that requires a user to obtain a subscription to the system.

125. (New) The system of claim 124, wherein the software allows the subscribed user to exchange articles of commerce within the system, the exchanges being free from per-transaction charges.

126. (New) The system of claim 124, wherein the user obtains the subscription by paying a monthly fee.

127. (New) The system of claim 124, wherein the software allows the subscribed user to perform a set amount of exchanges per subscription period free from per-transaction charges.

128. (New) The system of claim 127, wherein exchanges performed during the subscription period beyond the set amount result in per-transaction charges.

129. (New) The system of claim 124, wherein the system is a stock trading system that requires a periodic subscription fee and allows unlimited trading free from per-transaction charges for the duration of the subscription period.

130. (New) The system of claim 1, further including means for confirming that the first user is validly subscribed to the system.

131. (New) The system of claim 130, wherein the means for confirming confirms that the user has paid a subscription fee for the current period.

132. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein the database notes what articles are part of offers on the system and provides an indication within the account holding the first amount of the first article of commerce that the first amount of the first article of commerce is on hold, the amount being on hold for as long as the offer is active.

133. (New) The system of claim 132, wherein the database records a transfer of the first amount of the first article of commerce that is on hold to the second user upon acceptance of the offer by the second user.

134. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein if the indication of a subscription status of the second user indicates a valid subscription, the second user is permitted to exchange articles of commerce within the system, the exchanges being free from per-transaction charges.

135. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein the system is a stock trading system that requires a periodic subscription fee and allows unlimited trading free from per-transaction charges for the duration of the subscription period.

136. (New) The method of claim 35, wherein the step of verifying includes determining whether the first client has paid a fee for a period of access time.

137. (New) The method of claim 136, wherein the period of access time is one month.

138. (New) The system of claim 73, wherein the first non-currency article is a first stock share.

139. (New) The system of claim 138, wherein the second non-currency article is a second stock share.
140. (New) The system of claim 138, wherein the second non-currency article is a second commodity.
141. (New) The system of claim 138, wherein the second non-currency article is a second option.
142. (New) The system of claim 138, wherein the second non-currency article is a second future.
143. (New) The system of claim 73, wherein the first non-currency article is a first commodity.
144. (New) The system of claim 143, wherein the second non-currency article is a second stock share.
145. (New) The system of claim 143, wherein the second non-currency article is a second commodity.
146. (New) The system of claim 143, wherein the second non-currency article is a second option.
147. (New) The system of claim 143, wherein the second non-currency article is a second future.
148. (New) The system of claim 73, wherein the first non-currency article is a first option.
149. (New) The system of claim 148, wherein the second non-currency article is a second stock share.
150. (New) The system of claim 148, wherein the second non-currency article is a second commodity.
151. (New) The system of claim 148, wherein the second non-currency article is a second option.
152. (New) The system of claim 148, wherein the second non-currency article is a second future.
153. (New) The system of claim 73, wherein the first non-currency article is a first commodity.

154. (New) The system of claim 153, wherein the second non-currency article is a second stock share.

155. (New) The system of claim 153, wherein the second non-currency article is a second commodity.

156. (New) The system of claim 153, wherein the second non-currency article is a second option.

157. (New) The system of claim 153, wherein the second non-currency article is a second future.

158. (New) The system of claim 78, wherein the non-currency articles include a first commodity.

159. (New) The system of claim 78, wherein the non-currency articles include a first stock share.

160. (New) The system of claim 78, wherein the non-currency articles include a first option.

161. (New) The system of claim 78, wherein the non-currency articles include a first future.

162. (New) The system of claim 73, further including means for confirming that the first user is validly subscribed to the system.

163. (New) The system of claim 73, wherein the first amount of the first non-currency article of commerce is placed on hold within the account of the first user for as long as the offer is active.

164. (New) The system of claim 78, further including means for confirming that the first user is subscribed to the system.

165. (New) The system of claim 78, wherein the first amount of the first non-currency article of commerce is placed on hold within the account of the first user for as long as the offer is active.